

From: Lois Laczko September 14, 2009 9:52:45 AM  
Subject: Economic Development Commission Minutes 08/13/2009 ADOPTED  
To: SimsburyCT\_EconMin  
Cc:

ADOPTED

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COMMISSION MINUTES  
August 13, 2009  
REGULAR MEETING

1. CALL TO ORDER

Chairman Deming called the regular meeting of the Economic Development Commission to order at 7:30 AM in the Main Meeting Room of the Simsbury Town Offices. Commission members Nancy Haase, Kevin Crimmins, Derek Petersen, Alan Levesque, Alan Needham, and Chuck Minor were present.

2. Approval of Minutes of July 9, 2009

Commissioner Haase made a motion to approve the July 9, 2009 minutes as written. Commissioner Minor seconded the motion, which was unanimously approved.

3. Reports: SMSP, FVVA

There was no report.

4. Status of the PAD

Chairman Deming stated that at their last meeting, the EDC took a vote of the members that were present that the Commission take the draft PAD and send it to the Zoning Commission for further comment. This vote passed 4-2. He stated that they were hopeful that the Zoning Commission would schedule a public hearing this month in order to hear public comment.

Commissioner Needham stated that the Zoning Commission received their first copy of the draft PAD on the night of their meeting. Because this was their first review of the draft, the Commission members did not set a public hearing date. There is no Zoning meeting scheduled in August.

Commissioner Needham stated that he feels there will be compromises made prior to the PAD regulation being adopted. Chairman Deming stated that he sat on the PAD Subcommittee. There was a great deal of discussion regarding how proscriptive or prescriptive the regulation should be. This was an issue that several members of the Subcommittee had differences of opinions.

Commissioner Needham stated that the good news is that everyone on the PAD Subcommittee feels that this regulation is needed; the rest is a matter of compromise.

#### 5. Discussion of the EDC recommendations to the Charrette producers

Chairman Deming stated that he went to the presentation by Code Studio; they had several different sessions with several different groups. He distributed the Charrette schedule and a map of the study area to the Commission members.

Chairman Deming stated that Code Studio encouraged people to attend the Charrette. They will be taking public comment; Code Studio will work continuously throughout the process. The product will be a conceptual master plan for the Town Center; 3-D drawings, as well as a written code. The Code will reflect what the input that the consultant receives.

Commissioner Needham stated that he is not happy with the way people are being notified regarding the Charrette. He feels that more should be done regarding advertising. Chairman Deming stated that the Charrette will be televised through SCTV; it is on the Town website; and in the local newspaper.

Chairman Deming stated that, at the last meeting, the Commission members drafted a memo to Code Studio regarding their thoughts. He asked that the Commission members review this document for discussion.

Commissioner Needham stated that he agrees with the suggestion that each Commission member go to the Charrette meetings as individual residents and not as members of this Commission.

Commissioner Minor stated that he believes the overall tone of their discussions at the last meeting was that they wanted more walkability. He questioned if this should be at the top of the memo for emphasis. Commissioner Crimmins stated that the Economic Development Commission should encourage that, whatever is done, it be done in a way that there is the most walkability, although what is done is what matters most to this Commission.

The Commission discussed the possibility of prioritizing their list for the consultant. Commissioner Haase suggested re-working the summary into the opening statement followed by the bullet points. Chairman Deming stated that the opening statement could state that, primarily, whatever happens in Town should reflect this Commission's mission, which is to create a greater commercial tax base.

Commissioner Crimmins stated that this Commission should take a positive position on the desirability of permissive mixed used zoning regulations. Commissioner Needham stated that there should be an emphasis on residential regarding mixed use. Chairman Deming reminded the Commission that the Economic Development Commission's mission is to promote the commercial tax base. Commissioner Haase stated that although the residential component is missing from the downtown, she does not feel that an emphasis should be on residential with any less of an emphasis on the commercial. Commissioner Needham stated that the residential and commercial component go hand in hand. Having commercial businesses downtown will not drive business nearly as much as having a significant residential component. Commissioner Peterson stated that he agrees, although the emphasis should be made in the Zoning regulations.

Ms. Glassman encouraged the Commission members to be at the September 12th meeting with Code Studio. She stated that the consultant will be giving out pens and paper so the public can draw what they want in the downtown area. She asked the Commission to think in detail regarding the boundaries of the Center Zone. She also asked that they call business owners in this area to encourage them to come to the Charrette meeting also. Ms. Glassman stated that the second major event of the Charrette process is when the consultant unveils what they have drawn. Input will be taken so the consultant can rework the drawings if necessary.

Ms. Glassman stated that the Town will have access to people in many different areas of expertise. She asked that the Economic Development Commission bring worthwhile studies that have already been done to show the consultant and to be ready to discuss topics of interest. Ms. Glassman stated that this is a once in a lifetime opportunity for the Town and she would appreciate this Commission's help in getting as many people to the meeting as possible.

Commissioner Needham suggested meeting with the consultant as a group. Chairman Deming stated that the Economic Development Commission has one more scheduled meeting prior to the start of the Charrette. They should discuss how this Commission would like to get people to attend the Charrette. Commissioner Needham suggested putting together a Subcommittee now to start preparing for this. Ms. Glassman stated that the Commission could schedule a meeting with the consultant on Friday, the day before this

public meeting.

Regarding the opening statement, Commissioner Crimmins stated that he would work on this and e-mail it to Mr. Peck for his and the Commission member's review.

The Commission had a discussion regarding the bullet points. They discussed the reference to more flexible zoning and if this should be explained further. Commissioner Minor felt this point was too general. The Commission agreed that they should give examples, such as parking, density, use and lot coverage. Regarding the future use of the Meadows, Chairman Deming stated that this may be for more recreation, i.e. recreation fields, walking paths. He stated that he would add this to the third bullet point.

Regarding the fourth bullet point, the Commission added more detail concerning converting existing parking lots to a higher economic use. The Commission agreed that the fifth, sixth, seventh, and eighth bullet points should not be changed. Regarding the ninth point, Commissioner Crimmins suggested changing "propose better", to "improve". Commissioner Haase stated that they need to propose a specific plan for event parking. Commissioner Levesque stated that the Home Improvement Show will be taking place when the consultants are in Town; this will help them see what is needed. The Commission agreed that the tenth bullet point should not be changed.

Regarding the eleventh point concerning the transportation hub, Chairman Deming stated that this is where the rest room facility could be included. Chairman Deming stated that bullet point twelve brings in a future bikeway or a more extended bikeway network into Town. He feels that more detail should be added regarding the east/west access. Commissioner Needham stated that this detail could be discussed with the consultant when they meet with them. It may be an issue that is easier to discuss than to explain in writing.

The Commission agreed that the thirteenth point should not be changed.

Regarding the next bullet point regarding the residential component, the Commission agreed to change that point to state, "to allow for residential uses to Town Center area". They also agreed that this point should be moved further up the list. The Commission members also agreed that bullet point fifteen should be combined with the tenth point. The Commission agreed that the sixteenth point should not be changed. The Commission agreed that the seventeenth point should be combined with the second point.

The Commission agreed that the eighteenth point was very important. They

added examples, which included moving power poles and creating a Route 10 boulevard to facilitate pedestrian crossings.

Chairman Deming stated that point nineteen is a broad statement, although it is outside of the area that the consultants will be looking at. The Commission agreed to eliminate this point; it does not address Charrette issues.

Commissioner Needham suggested adding River access to point three.

Chairman Deming stated that the next regular meeting is scheduled for September 10th. He stated that he will add a discussion regarding the Economic Development Commission's recommendations for the Charrette to the agenda.

#### 6. New Business/Old Business

Commissioner Peterson stated that he is curious regarding what is happening with the Wagner site; what the status is in the north end; and what might be happening with The Hartford. Chairman Deming stated that the owner of the Wagner site is waiting for the PAD regulation. Regarding the north end of Town, Mr. Giorgio got approval for buildings in the front of the site. Commissioner Needham stated that The Hartford will be selling their north parcel. This has been subdivided out. A continuing care facility may be looking at building in this location.

#### 7. Status of Airport Study

Chairman Deming stated that the owner of this property is not interested in pursuing Phase II. Although they did not give a reason, he suspects that the number given from Phase I may have been far below what the property owners thought it should be. Chairman Deming stated that in order to proceed to Phase II, there needs to be an agreed upon methodology on how to value the property.

#### 8. Adjournment

Commissioner Haase made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 8:33 a.m. Commissioner Levesque seconded the motion, which was unanimously approved.